TRAMS

Grillparzer's Sappho

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GRILLPARZER'S SAPPHO

Biographical Introduction, Critical Analysis and Notes

by

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THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

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SAPPHO

The biographical part in the following thesis is based, so far as possible upon Grillparzer's autobiography. For the period after 1836 I have made us of August Ehrhard's Franz Grillparzer, Sein Leben und seine Werke. For the critical part other works have been consulted simply to corroborate my own conclusions. The following works were consulted.

Grillparzer	Autobiography
Ehrhard-Necker	Grillparzer, sein Leben und seine Werke
Moritz Necker	Leben und Schaffen
Dr. Julius Schwering . .	F. Grillparzer, hellenische Trauerspiele
Johannes Volkelt	F. Grillparzer, als Dichter des Tragischen
Richard M. Meyer	Die deutsche Literature des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts

Grillparzer's Werke Cotta Ausgabe in acht Bänden
Einleitung von August Sauer

FRANZ GRILLPARZER

"Nay, peace, O wretched one, was not for thee
Thy very striving baffled peace, thy constant aim."

Thus wrote Grillparzer in a threnody on Zacharias Werner in 1823. It was all too true of Werner, but how much sadder, how much more tragic it seems when applied to Grillparzer himself, of whom it was and is equally true. From the hour of self-consciousness to the end of his eighty years his life was one long striving after an ever elusory ideal. He stands alone among the literary men of his own time-- the Isolated Poet. Ad. Hynais, in an original painting representing the dramatists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has characterized his position in literature very skillfully. Of the nine poets represented, Grillparzer occupies the central foreground,-- alone, apart from the others. He is lost in deep study, his head rests in his right hand, in the left he holds a laurel wreath seeming unconscious and careless of it. Throughout his life he maintained an independent position. He had no patience with the school known as "Young Germany", he was out of sympathy with the Romantic School. The "Storm and Stress" movement did not fit in with his idea of

" des Innern stiller Frieden
Und die schuldbefreite Brust."

The Classical movement which followed the Storm and Stress is more nearly his own ideal, but even this, as we shall see later, had objectionable features. We might well anticipate that a man such as

Grillparzer with literary ideas of his own and living in a country where the oppressive thumb of the censor pressed every author into one and the same mould, would have an eventful and stormy career. Grillparzer disappoints us. He had individual aims, but he lacked courage to brave the obstacles which government and society threw in his way. He lacked faith in himself, faith in a Power great enough and strong enough to uphold him in an individual self-expression, in an independence which should disregard public disapproval and make it safe to follow the inner voice. The chief events of his life are as follows:

Jan. 15 1791-	Born at Vienna, the oldest of four brothers
-1801	Private school and home study under a tutor
1801-1804	At the Gymnasium
1804-1806	Philosophical Studies
1807-1811	Law Studies
1807-1809	Blanka von Kastilien
Nov. 10 1809	Death of his father
1810-1813	Private tutor in various noble families
1813-	Subordinate post in civil service
Jan. 31 1817-	Ahnfrau first performed
Nov. 13 1817	Brother drowns
Apr. 21 1818	First performance of Sappho
Jan. 24 1819	Death of his mother
1819-	In Italy
1821	Meets Katharina Fröhlich

Mar. 26-7	1821	First performance of the trilogy Das goldene Vliess
Feb. 19	1825	First performance of König Ottokars Glück und Ende
	1826	Visits Goethe
Feb. 28	1828	First performance of Der treue Diener seines Herrn
Apr. 3	1831	First performance of Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen
	1833	Director of the archives
Oct. 4	1834	First performance of Der Traum ein Leben
	1835	Tristia ex Ponto published
	1838	In France and England
Mar. 6	1838	First performance of Weh dem der lügt
	1843	In Turkey and Greece
	1847	Made a member of the Academy of Sciences
	1853	Autobiography
	1856	Receives pension and retires to private life
	1861	Receives title of Reichsrat
Jan. 15	1871	Celebration of his birthday
Jan. 21	1872	Death.

There is a marked similarity in the dissimilarity of Goethe's and Grillparzer's parents. In both instances the father was extremely practical, conscientious to a fault, almost pedantic in the accomplishment of duties. The mother in both instances lived for her children. But Goethe was much more fortunate. His mother was less excitable and did not have the highly sensitive and neurotic temperament of Grillparzer's mother which finally ended in religious insanity and suicide.

Grillparzer's life was not a pleasant one. He gives us a very vivid description in his Autobiography, of a very large gloomy house, situated in a most disagreeable part of Vienna. Here he spent the greater part of his early life, reading such books as Mozart's Zauberflöte, stories of the New Testament, and Curtins' History of Greece. What a difference between this child-hood picture and that of Goethe's. They are alike perhaps in that the father's discipline is the same, but beyond that the similarity ceases. Goethe's life is typical of his Tasso, Grillparzer's of his "Der treue Diener seines Herrn.

He tells us that his mother who"lived and breathed music compelled me to play the piano while she yelled into my ear the notes over, under, and between the lines until I suffered Hell's tortures." Finally his mother turned his musical education over to one surnamed Gallus, an admirable mixture of genius and good natured laziness. It was only on rare occasions, however, that his genius came to the surface, and on those occasions he would play and extemporize so charmingly that Frau Grillparzer forgave all his faults and the sky would be clear for another season of good natured fun. The first half of the lesson hour he usually "fooled" away playing with his pupil, not as the Frenchman says " à quatre mains" on the piano but "à quatre pattes" under it.

Grillparzer admits that he did not make much progress and finally because of some misdemeanor his father forbade any further music lessons.

His school life, so far as fulfilling his father's expectations, was a failure if it was anything. Everything that was required he neglected and all that he did not neglect was not required. At his father's death the family was left almost destitute. He became tutor in a private family and thus made a living. He now tried to find a publisher for his Blanka von Kastilien but failed and because of this he foreswore all further attempt along dramatical lines: a resolution which he did not keep for in 1817 we find him highly elated over the success of his Ahnfrau on the stage, and deeply wounded at the rough handling it received by the critics. In 1818 Sappho was played. While at work on the trilogy Das Goldene Vliess in 1819 his mother died. It was a severe blow to him. He could not continue with the work and it was not until he came back from Italy that he finished it.

After the performance of König Ottokars Glück, a patriotic drama, he took a trip through Germany. After making the acquaintance of several celebrated literary men in Berlin he went to Weimar where he met Goethe who treated him with unusual kindness. Grillparzer however staid but a few days and during the few days that he did remain acted more like a bashful school boy than Austria's greatest dramatist. However much Grillparzer may have felt his inferiority to "the lion" we, nevertheless feel a little out of patience with our poet for the course which he pursued in not even keeping up a correspondence with Goethe.

"Ein treuer Diener seines Herrn" is a drama in which the tragic theme is the conflict between the hero's moral principle and conditions of his surroundings. Banchbanus, the hero, allows his wife to be insulted and slain simply because he feared to betray his trust. In many ways the drama reflects Grillparzer's own career. He himself is the servant, Austria the master and his poetry his wife insulted and slain by the Austrian censorship. Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen, second in rank to Sappho, was played in 1831. Its reception was a hard blow to Grillparzer. At first it seemed to be a success but it was a mere succès d'estime and did not deceive Grillparzer. However, it seems as if his mortification had spurring influence upon him for on the twentieth of April of the same year he writes: "Strange indeed the influence upon me of this disappointment. At first highly mortifying, to be sure, but already the second day a quiet content took possession of me. I had escaped from the servitude of the public and its applause. I was again my own master, free to write or not write, to please or displease; no longer a servile author, because a man, a follower of my own inner-life's goal, participating neither in dreams nor the outer world."

On January 25, 1832 he writes: "Have been appointed to the position of Archivdirektor and thus sold the son of man for thirty pieces of silver." Almost the entire year was taken up in becoming acquainted with his new duties. The years that followed to the spring of 1838 were quiet and uneventful years in which he devoted

himself to his dramatic work. In 1835 he published a collection of short poems seventeen all told, under the very appropriate title Tristia ex Ponto. The earlier disappointments and physical sufferings had by this time lost somewhat of their poignancy; with the drift of years had come a measure of peace, sufficient that he could write for the Schluszwort of this collection.

Also hatt'er lang gesprochen,
  Hatte höchste Not geklaget,
Dasz man ihm das Herz durchstochen
  Und kein Rettungsmorgen taget.

Da kams durch die Luft gezogen,
  Saiten klangs, vernehmlich kaum,
Und sein Kummer war verflogen
  Und sein Leiden war ein Traum.

But this comparative peace of mind like all good things was ephemeral. Grillparzer was born for disappointment and disillusionment. Three years after this he published "Weh dem der lügt". Its cold reception and the public's unmistakable signs of displeasure again threw him into a gloom of despair so deep that he never again during his life offered a play to the public. Five years later this despondency was somewhat relieved by a trip to Turkey and Greece, although the trip itself was a disappointment. His ambition had been to visit all those places in reality which he had so often seen with his mind's eye. He wanted to see the

tower where Leander had first caught sight of Hero; and Mytilene, the birth-place of Sappho. But when, after many delays, sickness and inconveniences he reached Athens the Revolution dethroned King Otto, and the extreme illwill of the population made it impossible for a German speaking person to travel in Greece. He thought with horror of his return to Austria

"Dort stirbt des Lebens Leben
Im Einerlei mir aus"

It may not be amiss, here, to say a few words about Grillparzer's relations to women. Like many other poets he was always very susceptible to the charms of women, but the long series of his affaires de coeur, beginning with his fifteenth and ending somewhere near his eightieth year, exhibits his reluctance to step out of the poetry of love into the prose of matrimony. In matters of love as well as in art, inspiration was everything to him. It was the first glance, the first moment which either attracted or repelled him. Too often for Grillparzer's peace it was not the woman who appealed to him but rather his own ideal of woman. He saw her not as she was but as he thought she ought to be. The instant that she deviated a hair's breadth from this, his own conception of her, that instant his feelings rejected her as something alien.

He had his first love affair when but fifteen years old. The object of his affection was an actress, but he considered her so far beyond him that he did not even venture into her presence.

The result of this was a serious illness. Much later in life he learned that this actress had really cared for him. The second was also an actress, the next two were both married women, one of whom because her love was unrequited died of a broken heart. The next was one Miss Piquot. She indeed loved young Grillparzer and was really the only worthy rival of Kathi Fröhlich. When Miss Piquot heard that Grillparzer and Kathi were engaged she became suddenly ill and in a very short time died. She left a pathetic letter with her mother in which she confessed her love for the poet and begged her mother to care for "her" Grillparzer.

I have already hinted at his engagement with Katharina Fröhlich. His equivocal conduct towards her is the wonder of all his biographers and is impossible of explanation unless we accept what he himself says about the subject. It analyzes rather than explains or excuses his action; he says: "Our life together led me to conclude, that, although marriage would not have been contrary to my nature, the tie was not for me. There is a yielding and conciliatory quality in me which inclines me only too much to follow the directions of others; yet I could not bear the derangement of my inner life, or having any other person incessantly mixed up in it. I could not endure it, even when I desired it most. Even though I had married it would still have been necessary for me to forget that my wife had a being other than mine. My share of the reciprocal concessions, necessary to prevent painful jars, I could easily have made; but a tete-a-tate was a thing absolutely repugnant

to my solitary nature,"and again in a poem "Jugenderinnerungen im Grünen" he says that it was indeed possible to fit two halves together, but, since she (Kathi) was a whole and he was a whole, a harmonious union was an impossibility. And again in the Tragedy Libussa, Grillparzer makes Primislaus say to Wlasta

> "And dost thou know a heart must melt, e'er it
> United to another heart may be?"

All this-- not to defend or excuse Grillparzer but simply to show his reasons for nor marrying Kathi. During the ten years of their engagement they quarreled not infrequently; and often, yes, almost always these quarrels were due to Kathi's jealous disposition, or capriciousness- for she was headstrong, decidedly so-very attractive. The youngest of four sisters she had in measure been spoiled. Often had Grillparzer thought to break off the engagement, but not until 1830 did he do so. Strange as it may seem, not long after the "break" there sprang from this dead love a friendship which lasted as long as life; and in 1849 Grillparzer took rooms with the Fröhlich sisters, who treated him as a brother and cared for him as long as he lived.

When Grillparzer was eighty years old Austria had come to realize, faintly, the genius of the man, and so, to show its appreciation and atone for the injustice she had shown her foremost dramatist, Austria turned out "en mass" to celebrate his birthday. Just one year and one week after this Austria again turned out

"on mass" but this time flags were at half mast, colors were subdued, nobility and king were wearing black to honor the dead. When Death shuts the eyes of Genius appreciation ceases to be blind. Aye, honor the Dead! Sing their praise and laud them to the skies; your praise can not corrupt them now; let your appreciation make their life after death a heaven just as your condemnation made their existence a hell.

Grillparzer as Poet-

"Gescheit gedacht und dumm gehandelt,
So bin ich mein' Tage durchs Leben gewandelt."

And when Grillparzer wrote the above he had been wandering through life, thinking wisely and acting stupidly for seventy-seven years. Know thyself in order that you may act rightly, was not a truth for Grillparzer. He knew himself, knew that his ideals were right, his whole life proved this; but-- and he knew this also-- his will was weak, incapable of coping with actualities. Practical things Grillparzer could not grasp and self-sufficiency where immediate action was required was unknown to him. To win fame and climb to success on the rounds of reality was not for him; his genius dealt with the ideal world, peopled with creatures of his fancy. Such a genius can develop only under conditions that are absolutely unbinding, conditions that place no obstacles in the way of individual development, either by restraint or harsh criticism, and Grillparzer met with both: criticism and restraint did not call out the best that was in him; his genius was one that must be loved into Doing, not driven. First among the evil influences that undermined the best that he was capable of, was Austria itself. Let us look at the Austrian state affairs during the formation period of Grillparzer's genius.

The administration of Austria was not a system, it was a condition, it was based on neither plan nor principle, but on tradition and habit. The year after Grillparzer's birth Francis II became emperor and for forty-nine years steered the ship of state through a strait so narrow that one wonders how it ever survived until 1835 when Ferdinand the First succeeded him. Ferdinand was quite as despotic as Francis. The last thirty-nine years of these two periods (1809-48) were under the ministry of Metternich, the ideal embodiment of selfish diplomacy. He vetoed every liberal movement. He was a statesman without statesmanship, a diplomat with a diplomacy for nothing broader than the direct interest of the government. Let us guard against the influx of foreign intellect, and let us allow no foreign teachers or foreign students to enter our universities. Let us put a strict censorship over everything that is written or printed. Such were the conditions under which Grillparzer wrote, and when we remember that his nature was not strong or aggressive; that he lived, not in the daylight of life, but in the twilight, that he was not practical but invariably proved himself incapable of grappling with the real live things of everyday life; that he was shy to a fault, sensitive to a degree ruinous to the best that was in him,- and when we remember that most of his life was passed within the limits of his own home we can readily see how such a despotic ministry and censorship as that of Metternich would crush out all his individuality and drive him farther

and deeper into that seclusion which he so strikingly depicted in "The Poor Musician". Do you ask why did Grillparzer subject himself to this censorship? Why did he not write elsewhere: in Germany or in France? I make answer, Grillparzer was an Austrian; through and through an Austrian and to such an extent that his loyalty reached into the fringe of servitude. In a measure Bancbanus reflects Grillparzer's own ideas. In judging of Grillparzer and his work we must remember then that these two elements in his nature, the desire to be loyal, coupled with the restraint of the censorship, and the inward longing to be free and unhampered, were constantly at war with each other.

Before taking up the subject of Grillparzer as dramatist it might be well to classify his dramas into the four natural divisions into which they fall.

I. Fate dramas
    Die Ahnfrau
II. Classical dramas
    Sappho
    Das goldene Vliess
    Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen
III. Historical dramas
    König Ottokars Glück und Ende
    Ein trener Diener seines Herrn
    Ein Bruderzwist in Habsburg
IV. Comedies and fantastic plays
    Melusine
    Der Traum, ein Leben
    Weh' dem, der lügt.

The two remaining complete dramas Die Jüden von Toldeo and Libussa belong in no special class. Beside these we have the three fragments Spartakus, Hannibal and Esther.

It is not my purpose to give a detailed account of each one of these but simply to touch lightly on a few of the principal ones and then give a more detailed account of the one under consideration, viz. Sappho.

The story of the Ahnfrau is ghostly. This Ahnfrau who once during her earthly career had committed an "indiscretion" has now been defunct some few centuries. Now the indiscretion of this unfortunate Ahnfrau had been punished rather severely by her noble spouse; at least it seemed rather severe for she died from the effects of the knife-thrust. Evidently the punishment was not enough, so she was doomed to walk the earth a spectre until the last of her race like herself has become defunct. This condition is almost fulfilled for her survivors are one Count Borotin and his daughter. The Count had had a son who had been drowned while still a child but what grieved the good old Count was the body of the child had never been found. Now the daughter is in love with one Jaromir - a stranger, a bandit, and even worse as you shall see. Things and relationships have become rather interesting when soldiers come and rout out the outlaws of whom Jaromir is the leader. Disclosures of course follow and who should Jaromir be but the drowned son of Borotin, who by the way was not drowned but stolen and reared an outlaw. In the fight that follows

Jaromir kills (unwittingly) his father. The sister and was-to-be bride kills herself and- but you can see that all this must be very exciting, and exciting it is. Uproar and tumult are on all sides, and then as a fitting end Jaromir dies, the Ahnfrau creeps back into her tomb, the Borotin family is a thing of the past and the play ends in deep silence.

The Ahnfrau was the first and only attempt of the fate drama by Grillparzer. It was an immediate success but it did not satisfy the poet himself. To show that he could write a successful drama without the fate element he brought Sappho before the public in 1818. This was followed in 1821 by the trilogy Das goldene Vliess. The idea of this trilogy first came to him while playing the symphonies of Haydn, Beethoven, and Mozart. It is the modernized story of the classical legend of the Golden Fleece. The Fleece, like the dagger in the Ahnfrau brings about the final tragedy. This drama meets more nearly the requirements of a true trilogy than any previous work for each part is complete in itself and yet all are closely bound together. Especially should we notice Grillparzer's skill in adapting style to the speakers. Goethe in dealing with Greek subjects never deviates from the high elevated diction of the classics, regardless of who speaks, be it priestess, the gods, or a slave. Grillparzer always adapts the language and style to the character. Another thing of note in the trilogy is the wonderful clearness with which the characters are drawn, and not only that but the characters develop. Jason leaves part of his old self behind at each successive stage in the drama.

When he comes out at the end he is not the Jason that he was on entering and Medea, how much more human she seems in Grillparzer's drama than she does in either Euripides, Seneca Corneille or Klinger. She is no longer the avenging heartless fury of the other dramas, but a human being whose every act is motivated and subdued, and whose poetical significance is brought out for the first time.

The drama was not well received and as a consequence Grillparzer became gloomy and somewhat reckless. "König Ottokars Glück und Ende" depicts the overthrow of Ottokar of Bohemia by Rudolph von Hapsburg. The drama is full of action, but lacks coherence. The character drawing is rather weak. In Ottokar Grillparzer has depicted not a type but an individual. This fact may be accounted for in that Napoleon served as a model for Ottokar, and Napoleon can hardly be considered as a type. After his trip through Germany and his visit with Goethe Grillparzer came back and in 1828 wrote Der treue Diener seines Herrn. It was Grillparzer's second historical drama, and like the former it proved a failure. Bankban, the hero, reflects Grillparzer's own idea of loyalty, loyalty which to us suggests servility. Grillparzer had been reading Kants Ethics and imbibed not a little of that self-effacing duty which Kant taught, and Grillparzer misunderstood, and so as a result of this misconception Grillparzer gives us a Bankban; who, because of his loyalty to Kaiser Franz, allows his wife to be insulted by Otto, the Kaiser's nephew. Finally she is driven to commit suicide in order to save her honor, while Bankban makes no attempt to gain his own right, simply because he trusts to the justice of the king.

Bankban was a hero after Grillparzer's own heart. He placed him above Jason and Ottokar and on an equality with Hero. We today can hardly conceive such a view, or reconcile ourselves to Grillparzer's idea of duty. But Grillparzer was Grillparzer: the Almighty made him so. To us, the aim and object of life does not seem to be self-effacement but self-development; not self-debasement, but self-ennoblement. We can not conceive of an ultimate, unalterable, Duty or Right. All things are relative. Truth today may be falsehood tomorrow. Spartan, Athenian, Roman laws and justice are not law and justice today; conditions have changed. Bankban's service to his master was a duty under certain given conditions. It was no longer a duty when his wife's honor was to be considered. Conditions had changed, his highest duty was to her.

Grillparzer's next drama, Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen, is quite different from the foregoing one. It is a classical subject, in which he is always at his best, and takes up the story of Hero and Leander.

Hero is perhaps the most human of all his women. She is closer to us than Sappho, more lovable than Melitla, as innocent and stainless in her love tragedy as Medea is guilty in hers. She is altogether a beautiful creation, sympathetically conceived. Few love scenes are more delicately thought out and executed than is her confession of love to Leander in the Tower. The drama has defects to be sure, but they are easily offset by its many excellent qualities, and not least of these is the lyrical element which I think is present in spite of the fact that Carlyle says:

"The truth of the matter is, Grillparzer can not communicate a poetic life to any character or object; and in this, were it in no other way, he evinces the intrinsically prosaic nature of his talent."

Let us acquit Carlyle of malice and envy, for his business, just then, was to criticise Grillparzer, and a critic is often guided by the same motives that direct his author. The author tried to write a good book and the critic tries to make us believe that he could have written a better one. Imagine gruff, bluff old Carlyle criticising sensitive poetical Grillparzer! When still a boy Grillparzer had eagerly devoured a text of Mozart's Zauberflöte. It had become a very part of himself and on it is based his next drama, Der Traum,ein Leben. The conception dates back to a time before Sappho, to 1817. Between 1817 and the time he again took up the play (1829) he had become acquainted with Lope de Vega, who greatly influenced him. The drama is perhaps too well known throug college texts to need discussion here so I shall say nothing about it. "Weh dem der lügt" was the next and last drama to be put upon the stage during the author's life. It proved a complete failure at the time although it has since won distinction on the stage. Just why Austria failed to see the merit in this drama is difficult to say. Certainly it shows a humor and a delicacy of touch not before met with in German dramas. It is fresh in manner, and shows to us a side of the poet's nature which but for the Metternich restraint on all things intellectual might have surprised Grillpar-

zer into becoming Germany's foremost writer of comedies. But Austria did not see, she saw more profit in driving Grillparzer into seclusion and to writing short biting epigrams. Witness this, written the day after the performance of "Weh dem der Lügt".

"Was hängt ihr euch an mich und meinem Lauf
Und strebt dem Höhern plumpen Dranges wider?
Ich zieh' euch, merk' ich' nicht zu mir herauf
Doch ihr, weiss Gott, mich auch zu euch nicht nieder."

And this brings me to his lyric poems, poems which under careful study, will give us a clearer, better understanding of our poet's temperament than his autobiography. They tell the history of his soul in verse. In them he touches every phase of human interest, sorrow, joy; hate, love; laughter, tears; humor, tragedy; nature, humanity; he sings lofty hymns to patriotism, and whispers passionate lyrics to the loved one; he eulogizes musicians and writes odes in praise of their compositions. His epigrams sparkle with wit, glow with humor, burn with scarcasm and glitter with scorching invective and satire against Philistinism. As before stated his poems mirror his own inner life as he tells us in the last line of his first poem

"They are loosened fragments from his life"

and this life was not a joyous life; it was one of self-denial, of disillusion, of renunciation and resignation. He tells us in

his next poem

"Des Menschen ew' ges Los, es heisst: Entbehren
Und kein Genuss, als den du dir versagt."

We hear much now-a-days of Father Wagner's "Simple Life". It is nothing more than another view of Grillparzer's "Simple Heart". It is a kind of Schopenhauer pessimism: the world as Will. Will nothing, desire nothing, and happiness is yours. So long as we are the subjects of willing we can not know happiness or peace, for the will is never satisfied and we as its subjects are constantly stretched on the revolving wheel of Ixion; we are the ever-longing Tantalus. No possible satisfaction in the world could suffice to still the longing of his will, set a goal to its infinite craving, and fill the bottomless abyss of its heart. Therefore says Grillparzer:

"Entbehren, heisst des Menschen Los".

This idea is beautifully embodied in one of his two prose pieces, The Poor Musician. In almost all of his other works Grillparzer contents himself with depicting the miseries of the hero, which result from the conflict of the hero's inner consciousness with the world's outer life. Here in this prose-poem Grillparzer shows us, that, though the hero is conquered, robbed of his fortune, robbed of his sweetheart, driven into seclusion, forced to beg a living, and finally to die in the effort of saving the children

of his former love, is nevertheless happy, happy in his own way, happy because he has learned the lesson of self-denial, the lesson that the lot of life is Entbehren.

Just as we think of Goethe as poet and scientist, of Michael Angelo as artist and poet, of Browning as poet and philosopher, so must we think of Grillparzer as poet and musician. He would undoubtedly have objected to such a title, for he tells us that it is quite as absurd to call a composer a "Tonepoet" (Tondichter) as it would be to call a poet a "word musician" (Wörter-musikant). Grillparzer's aim was not to harmonize poetry and music, but rather to separate them. He maintains that any operatic composition which has closely followed the words of a text must inevitably be mechanical, its character can not possibly be independent or self sustaining.

Music with Grillparzer is an abstraction, unadapted to any thing but itself, because it unlike every other art is independent. The beauty of architecture is dependent on its utility, sculpture is mimetic; the same, to a very large extent, may be said of painting, poetry employs the medium of articulate speech, and must therefore assume a national or provincial form. Sound, on the other hand- the medium employed by the musician- is not local, but universal. The musician has no existing antecedent material to deal with, his production is created,- imagination in the strictest sense of the term,- Music is the Ding an sich and therefore Grillparzer says that words and music must ever remain separate.

We do not, of course, agree with Grillparzer in all that he says. He speaks true so far as he goes, but he seems to ignore entirely the fact that there are exceptions, exceptions occasioned by the universal variability of mankind. He would imprison music within itself forgetting that under certain conditions, and in certain types, music, in the words of M. Linéque, is the medium of communication between the noblest powers of sound and the noblest powers of the soul.

Much might be said of Grillparzer as a musician. His practice often confounded his theories, for he tells us of a habit he had of setting up before him engravings and then rendering into music thoughts which the object awakened in him. Was he not here rendering words into sound? And yet his intense love, his religion if you will, of pure music, music without words, was ever Grillparzer's highest aim. Before closing I wish to speak briefly of Grillparzer's method in dealing with classical subjects.

Grillparzer's place in literature, as I have stated elsewhere, is exclusive, his style and method of treatment, therefore, were peculiar to himself. He like many other poets dealt with classical subjects, but unlike every other poet, he dealt with them in a modern way. He believed it impossible for any author to transport himself into a classical atmosphere to such an extent as to enable him to depict its life true to its time. According to Grillparzer man cannot rid himself of present conditions, ancient ideals can only be conceived as they are seen in the light of modern conditions

and at their best they are nothing more than classical forms in modern garb, and so Grillparzer makes no attempt to introduce a classical atmosphere in his dramas. He takes the soulless, statuesque, characters of Greek literature, and with his magic pen touches them into life. He breathes into them the breath of our own modern ideals, places them before us and lets them act out their destinies, not as gods and goddesses, but as mortals, as men and women, thoroughly human, and because human, full of faults and inconsistencies.

The Historical Sappho

About 1200 B. C. the Aeolian Greeks, driven by the Dorians from their native country, Laconia, wandered north, crossed the Aegean Sea, reached the western coast of Asia and settled there. They are perhaps the oldest of the Greeks, and were the first to reach a stage of civilization which demanded education for its hours of leisure. Here, and especially in Mitylene[*], on the island of Lesbos, sprang up a literature, the lyric element of which has not been equalled since. These Aeolians are the ancestors of Sappho, who 600 years nearer the Christian era, or more accurately 610 B.C., was at the zenith of her fame. Much has been written for and against her, but in one thing all agree: her extant poetry is absolutely faultless, dazzling fragments

"Which still like sparkles of Greek fire,
Burn on through time, and ne'er expire.[#]"

The known facts of her life are few. Her parents came from Troad to Lesbos. Their names and those of her two brothers are preserved to us. Sappho herself married a rich man named Circolas, whose only distinction is that he was Sappho's husband. Pity the husband

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[*] cf J .A. Symonds, Studies of Greek Poets

[#] Quoted from J. A. Symonds, by H.T.Warton in his very excellent book, "Sappho, A Memoir and Translation."

of a famous woman.

From fragment 85[†] we would infer that she had a daughter named Clais. Because of her fame as a poet, musician, and highly educated woman, she drew around her a circle of women who came to be taught by her. They instituted a sort of school devoted to poetry, music and the fine arts. This school was exclusively for women, a sort of a Tennyson's Princess affair.

The story of her love for Phaon, and the leap over the Lucadian Rock is a myth invented by the later comic poets. For a hundred years after her death none of these things are mentioned. The name of Phaon does not occur in any of her fragments. The story, or myth, about Phaon, the old ferryman of Mitylene, is that one day while waiting to row someone across, a woman came to him and asked to be rowed over the stream. He would accept no pay and so as a reward for his generosity the old woman (she was Aphrodite) gave him a box of ointment, which, when he used it made a young and most handsome man out of him. Hitherto Sappho had been immune to the wiles of love but when she saw Phaon she immediately fell a victim to his beauty and grace, and because he refused to recognize her sprang from the Lucadian Rock and perished. Thus Sappho has come down to us as a type of love-lorn, despairing, suicidal damsels.

[†] The ref. to Sappho's fragments are always to H.T. Wharton.

SAPPHO

(A) Origin and Growth

On the evening of January 31, 1817, two men were seated in the theater at Vienna watching the first performance of a new play. One of them, short, heavy set, and bald headed, a type of the ordinary theatre goer, was seated directly in front of the stage. Evidently the play did not please him, for every few minutes he would mutter in a dissatisfied tone, "Das Stuck ist gar zu grell, gar zu grell." The other man, tall slender, with blue eyes, dark blond hair, pale but decided features, was seated farther back. He too, seemed to be dissatisfied, not so much with the play, perhaps, as with the antics of the man in front of him. The play was the Ahnfrau- the tall slender man was Grillparzer, its author. It was these adverse criticisms against ghosts, daggers, and the general spectre-castle type of the Ahnfrau that decided Grillparzer to write a play wholly without the fate element. It was natural that he should turn to the classics but he was still uncertain as to the subject he would choose, when chance decided the matter for him. As he was walking and chatting one day with a certain Dr. Joel in the park, the latter suggested the theme of Sappho for a libretto of an opera. Grillparzer replied at once that it seemed more suitable for a tragedy. They separated, Grillparzer continuing his walk. Before returning home that night the plan for Sappho was complete. He immediately

set to work and in three weeks the play was finished.

One might go into much detail as to how much he was aided and influenced by such plays as Madame de Staël's Corinne, Goethe's Torquato Tasso, also his Iphigenie, and last Kleist's Sappho. But it is not my purpose to do this here. An excellent and detailed study of Kleist's influence, and the relation of the two Sapphos, may be found in Dr. J. Schwering's little book, Franz Grillparzer's hellenische Trauerspiele.

(B) Critical Analysis.

Sappho was published in 1818. At this time "Die Ahnfrau", the drama which brought Grillparzer into prominence had been before the public a little over a year. Sappho is written in very harmonious blank verse, admirably suited to the purpose in hand. The choice of the subject necessarily determined the nature of the composition. Since it deals primarily with love and the more artistic phase of human life Grillparzer with his fine poetic feeling could not think of intrigue, the bustle of soldiery, deep laid and intricate plots, as having any part in the sorrows of the love-lorn, forsaken Sappho.

Naturally the first question that comes to us, as we read the drama, is what element in this, or these myths of Sappho first appealed to Grillparzer. Was it her mad love for the rejuvenated

ferryman, Phaon? Surely not; was it the comic side? Impossible, since there is not a single touch of humor throughout the play. And beside neither of these phases reflected Grillparzer, and therefore would not appeal to him. He was an intellectual idealist constantly at war with the facts of everyday life. It was this then, the struggle of Sappho the intellectual poetess consecrated to art, with Sappho the woman as a part of everyday humanity, that attracted Grillparzer.

He himself has told us that the fundamental idea, the theme of the drama- for all Grillparzer's dramas are thematic- is, that art and life are incompatible, and herein Sappho resembles Tasso, both depicting the idea that the poet is born, is consecrated to the gods, and that his laurel wreath is a crown of thorns. This fact, that Sappho is "born a poet", and that the gods leave her no choice, that she can not act otherwise than she does because they too have placed in Sappho's heart those human passions which bring about her downfall makes her fate truly tragic.

The figure of Sappho as she appears before us in the second scene of the play is a splendid one. She has just returned from the Olympic games where her fame as poetess has been acknowledged by the bestowal upon her, of the laurel wreath. The enthusiasm of the people at her return gives us an insight into her character, namely, that she was worthy of love. It also affords Grillparzer an opportunity to introduce Melitta, naive, simple; a perfect foil for Sappho, which brings out all the more strikingly the latter's superiority.

Almost the first words that Melitta utters give us an intimation of the conflict which is to follow. As Sappho's train approaches and old Rhamnes shouts, "She comes!" Melitta gasps, "Who? Ye gods!" She has caught sight of Phaon and he occupies her attention to the exclusion of everything else. Even Sappho and her newly won wreath is forgotten. When old Rhamnes reproaches Melitta and insists upon her noticing the wreath Melitta can only say:

> "Dost thou see another by her side?
> A lofty radiant form is standing there.
> 'Tis thus they paint the God of Lyre and Bow."

Scene two serves to show us the unselfish nature of Sappho. She rejoices in the possession of the laurel wreath, not because she herself finds any pleasure in it, but because it means honor to her people. And not only has she brought back a wreath, but also one called Phaon and in her praise of him we see how blindly she loves him. His very denial of the virtues which she attributes to him seem to her an indication of his worth. She endows him with gifts which alone could allure her from the Wolkennahen Gipfeln down to the smiling earth there to taste a bliss she ne'er had dreamed of having.

Her blind worshipful love is brought out all the more clearly in the following scene where we find Sappho and Phaon alone, recalling again the events of their meeting at the Games. How admirably the poet foreshadows the conflict! We almost hear the

grating of the iron of fate when Sappho says:

"Yea, I have learnt to lose and learnt to want!"

A little later she says:

"Yet one thing I could never bear to lose
Thy love, dear Phaon, without it I must die."

She has climbed to the very pinnacle of human fame, but the winds beat cold upon her brow and gladly she'd renounce the scentless, fruitless, laurel wreath to seek some other source of earthly bliss. With pleading eyes and hands outstretched to Phaon she whispers:

"Let us strive to make each other blest
Around our brows one common garland twine."

And herein lies Sappho's tragic guilt. She would do that which the gods have forbidden. She would drink of life, from Art's intoxicating cup, and sip rich draughts of art, from Life's all-bounteous hand.[†]

In scene five we have Melitta and Sappho alone. What a contrast the two women present! Sappho is the very embodiment of all that is ideal and artistic; womanhood, fullblown and perfect. Melitta is nature; real, artless, innocent: womanhood unblown; a bud fresh with the dew of innocence that only the warmth of love can touch into flower. Sappho's face reflects the evening glow. Melitta's laughs with breaking dawn. When Sappho speaks to her in

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[†] cf.11 280-3

"Lass uns denn trachten, mein geliebter Freund,
Uns beider Kränze um die Stirn zu flechten,
Das Leben aus der Kunste Taumelkelch,
Die Kunst zu schlürfen aus der Hand des Lebens.

the hope of winning a word of praise for Phaon, Melitta is shy and silent, unconscious that her apparent dulness is only the shyness of unwakened love. Ah, but if Melitta is unconscious of her love for Phaon, Sappho is not.

"I could hate thee, verily!"

she says, and then, as Melitta is about to go, suddenly changes her mood, kisses Melitta tenderly, and then asks her:

"But tell me child, will Phaon be happy here?"

Just as if Melitta could know. But how well the poet knew the human heart! Sappho blind in her love for Phaon can not see the folly of her questions, she is so wildly happy, and yet under this joy she sees the touch of an unseen fear. 'Twixt him and her she sees a black abyss, and there upon the hither side the golden fields of joy lie far beyond her reach. This scene is not at all dramatic but it is nevertheless very beautiful both in form and content, and through her conversation with Melitta we get at the very heart of her absorbing passion for Phaon, and thus our author prepares us for the outbreak that follows.

The first act is brought to a fitting close with the Ode to Aphrodite, a very free rendering of one of the two complete poems[+] of Sappho remaining to us.

The whole of act two is a work of art. Tastefully indeed has the poet conceived and worked out the scenes leading up to the initial impulse which comes at the end of the fourth scene of the

[+] See Warton's Sappho

second act.

Phaon enters somewhat annoyed, it would seem, from what he says. The banquet which Sappho had given in his honor, or more perhaps for the sake of expressing her warm affection for her country-men, has not been pleasing to our hero. In his soul there is a vague unrest. The spell of Sappho's charms is still a veil that hides the light of reason from his troubled brain. In vain he strives to bind the broken threads 'twixt past and present, all appears as in a dream, confused and undefined. The object of his fondest dreams, now that 'tis gained, seems robbed of all the joy that once it held for him. He does not know his heart is dead to Sappho's love, that that which holds her to him now is nothing but the glory and the splendor that attaches to her name. But just because he doubts, we know that love in Sappho's arms is not for him. He now recalls the evil things that men have said of her, but with defiance he would shield her against a world. In this speech of Phaon's we recognize an effort on Grillparzer's part to vindicate Sappho's character against the evil imputations of immorality, which were then current and generally believed.

In scene two, the poet, with consummate art gives us in a few words, spoken by Eucharis, all that has passed at the banquet. Sappho had spoken harshly to Melitta, had smiled at her in a mocking way and thus confused the poor child. The banquet had served to bring Melitta and Phaon together and prepare the way for the love which follows. Not yet is Melitta conscious of the cause of

her inward disturbance. She realizes that something new, strange, before unknown, has come into her life but what it is she does not know. That it is something near and vital is shown when at the unkind words of Eucharis she bursts into tears.

In the next scene we find Melitta alone. In vain she has endeavored to twine a wreath from the roses gathered by the other maidens. Now she has desisted and bitterly she cries out against the fate that has made her a slave. No one to love, no one to be loved by; it is thus that Grillparzer shows us the humanity of Melitta. She was born to love and be loved. Melitta however, does not realize this. She simply feels the need of something which, as a slave, can never be hers, and so she prays the gods to take her up to them.

The technical side of the drama has been finely conceived, for Phaon, behind the rose bush, has overheard Melitta's lamentation and now comes forward to give the downcast maiden wordsof comfort and good cheer, which he does in a beautifully awkward manner, by assuring her that she need not thus distress herself over the blunder at table. It has only amused him as well as Sappho. Seeing that he has failed, he makes other attempts, and finally succeeds in diverting the girl's thoughts . She relates how she had come to Sappho, recalls Sappho's kindness, and soon Melitta is her own natural self again; vivacious, and with no further desire for liberty. They continue talking and finally, after a voice has called Melitta Phaon gives her a rose and asks one in return. This necessitates Melitta's climbing a bank in order to reach the

rose she wants. She slips, falls into Phaon's arms who kisses her just as Sappho enters.

Thus Grillparzer has led us up to the initial impulse of the plot. The conflict which is the theme of the drama has now begun. Melitta and Phaon are conscious of each other; they realize their affinity. Phaon has stepped from the perplexity of bewildered admiration for Sappho, into the freedom of awakening love for Melitta. That he is not yet sure of his feeling is evinced in subsequent scenes.

And what of Sappho? How does she bear up under this trial, this affront, not only to her love, but to her pride? She, the great Sappho, has offered Phaon her love, has exalted him far above his station in life, and nowhe is drawn away from her by this mere slip of a slave. Naturally we expect from her an outburst of anger, but not so. She dismisses Melitta with a few words half bitter, half kind, and then apologizes to Phaon for the banquet which had, she fears, proved distasteful to him. Although Sappho says nothing in anger in the interview with Phaon, we feel nevertheless the volcano of passion beneath the calm exterior. Her self control is admirable, and tends to heighten, rather than weaken the struggle which we know she is undergoing. At the same time she will not allow herself to believe in Phaon's complete faithlessness. Perhaps he has only been playing with Melitta, and although she would not have Melitta deceived, she hopes, nevertheless , that this is the case. She admonishes

Phaon that he, by no unthinking jest, awaken thoughts or desires in Melitta's heart which must remain unsatisfied. But Phaon scarcely hears her. He is thinking of Melitta. Her sweet naive manner has appealed to him. He does not contrast her with Sappho, for the simple reason that Sappho is completely out of his mind for the time being. At last Sappho leaves him and enters a grotto to dedicate an hour to the muses while he goes to sleep on a grassy bank.

With the opening of act three Sappho enters. The muses have been unable to drive away the hated sight of Phaon and Melitta. A thousand contending emotions disturb her aching heart. Surely Phaon can not be faithless. 'Twas but a momentary impulse that had led to his act and beside man's love is not to be measured by woman's. His impetuous soul is a slave to change, and in his heart he finds room for other feelings than his love. Sappho realizes this, or rather, her fond and blind love creates these fanciful excuses for him. The world, for Sappho, is centered in Phaon. He embodies the one thing needful to her own completeness: love. But alas, the love at whose shrine she worships is of her own creating! Turning she sees Phaon asleep on the grassy bank and almost is she persuaded that she has wronged him for, it seems to her, only on the lips of innocence could such a smile rest. Stooping over him she kisses his brow and he, half opening his eyes murmurs, "Melitta". Do we wonder that Sappho starts? All

the torturing suspicions that had crept into her heart, and which she had just succeeded in driving away, now come back with horrible conviction. Faintly she echoes the name he has just spoken, "Melitta". That is all she can say, but in her tone there lies a world of pain. Phaon, however, seems alive with a new feeling. He has thrown off the old shadow, and once again is happy with the old happiness. And here, it seems to me, we get the first intimation of Phaon's development. Certainly unconscious, so far as he is aware of it, but it is there, nevertheless. It is the first indication that he is finding himself, becoming conscious of an approach to his affinity. That Sappho is not this affinity is vividly brought home, to Sappho at least, if not to himself. He tells her his dream. Again upon Olympia's height he stands. The bewildering shouts of men and clang of chariot wheels make vocal every echoing peak and wooded glen. When- Hark- a silence falls, he hears the music of a voice that softly steals upon his ear, and she who sings stands once again before him wrapped in mist as is the brightness of the summer sky. No longer crowns the laurel wreath her brow, and naught but earthly smiles are now upon the lips that but a moment since had wakened music half divine. No longer Sappho's face he sees, but in its profile he can trace the features of a lovely child. 'Tis Sappho's face- and yet, 'tis not; but whose it is he does not know until Sappho almost beside herself shrieks, "Melitta!" Even now Phaon but half realizes that

Melitta is the ideal of that vague undefinable restlessness; that blind groping upward for something higher which he had experienced before meeting with Sappho. All he can say is,

> "Who said that it was she? I knew it not!"

But Sappho knew. Irresistably the conviction overwhelms her and she sends Phaon away.

Sappho, left alone, abandons herself for the moment to all the agonies of a proud spirit crushed by the knowledge of misplaced faith and love. For a moment she regrets her step.

> "O wretched fool! Why did I leave the heights
> With laurel crowned, where Arganippe purls,
> And muses' songs with starry symphonies
> Unite, to enter here this narrow vale
> Where poverty, deceit, and treachery reigns?
> There, high above the clouds- there was my place
> Down here, for me, no refuge but the grave."

But this regret soon gives way to jealousy. She summons Melitta to learn what are the charms that have supplanted hers. Melitta is adorned with flowers and clad in her best apparel. Sappho thinks that the girl has done this to eclipse her. But Melitta, poor child, is quite unconscious of any wrong. She, like Phaon is unconscious of the significance of that feeling which, in each of them is working toward self-expression. Her answers

to Sappho's questions are so simple, so direct, that the latter forgets her resentment. But in spite of this calm, we feel ourselves in the presence of a critical moment. Sappho asks Melitta that she lay aside her ornaments and Melitta goes to obey. For a moment it seems as if the impending conflict is averted. But the moment of calm that ensues is only for the purpose of gathering strength for the final crash. Melitta turns and faces her mistress. Her ornaments are laid aside save one rose that blossoms on her breast. This too, Sappho orders her to throw away but Melitta refuses. And then all the pent up passion and uncontrolable hatred of a jealous heart leaps forth and Sappho, with a gleaming dagger, stands over Melitta like an avenging demon. In answer to Melitta's cry for help Phaon enters. Impetuously he defends the young girl. But Melitta, seeing the silent suffering of her benefactress, forgets the wrong done her and falls at Sappho's feet. She would sacrifice everything, rose, life, all, if only Sappho will forigve. Phaon, however, draws the reluctant girl away and this closes the third act.

The last scene but one of the above act, as I have elsewhere stated marks the climax of the drama. Looking back we can see how each character has developed. In Melitta there is very little change. She is the simple, loving, sympathetic child of nature now, that she was at the opening of the play. With Phaon and Sappho it is otherwise. These two, seemingly have exchanged places. In both the change has been one of disillusionment, but

the end attained is not the same in both cases. Phaon, from a sense of inferiority at the beginning of the play has developed self-confidence. Sappho, on the other hand has lost the self-assurance which she had at the beginning. I shall speak of this later.

The greater part of act four occupies itself with depicting Sappho's jealousy. As the curtain rises we see Sappho alone in the moonlight. We can guess from her attitude and from what she says how great has been her suffering. It does not seem possible to her that grief can kill, else would she have died. Again and again thoughts of Phaon's treachery come to her, but she will not harbor them. Dark thoughts arise within her soul until in despair with her anguish she cries, "O Gods Immortal, live ye still?" Then, suddenly, as she remembers the island of Chios the thought of banishing Melitta suggests itself. Thither will she send her and have her kept under strict watch- no not strictly kept, she says, that would be too cruel.

This ever-returning trace of tenderness in Sappho, for those who have wronged her, amidst the tempest of her anger, is the touch of genius. Not for one single moment does Grillparzer allow us to lose our sympathy for Sappho. But for this nobility of soul in Sappho we should only see the ludicrous side of a woman's love for one much younger than herself. But Grillparzer foresaw this danger and with that thought ever before him he created Sappho who awakens in us nothing but the deepest kind of "Mitleid".

In the next scene Sappho commits the business of removing Melitta into Rhamnes' hands. Scherer and others have criticised, rather severely, the abrupt dialogue of Sappho and Rhamnes, but to me it seems admirably true to human nature. Sappho is angry, full of an unnamable indignation, and she longs for some one to share it with her. What is more natural than that she should seek for confirmation of her own overwrought feelings from Rhamnes who happens to be near? Every human being wants and must have sympathy, and whatever else Sappho may not be, she is human in a most human way. This very element in her nature it is, that wins our admiration; that makes her forgive, and that finally brings about her tragic end.

In the fourth scene Rhamnes endeavors to carry out Sappho's orders. He has found Melitta and is now endeavoring to take her to the seashore where a boat is in readiness to take them to Chios. But Melitta has a strange foreboding of evil. She refuses to go and old Rhamnes' heart aches for the unhappy girl. Sympathetic tears fill his eyes. Gladly would he forego this duty but it must be so, for Sappho has commanded it. One her knees Melitta begs him to have pity on her:

"Erbarmt sich niemand meiner?"

she cries, and a second time Phaon answers her appeal for help .

For a moment it seems as if Phaon would do violence to old and faithful Rhamnes. Then Phaon sees the boat and like an inspiration the thought of flight comes to him. Now for the first

time he awakens to full consciousness of his love for Melitta, and on the instant he decides to flee with her. This determination on his part constitutes the tragic crisis, for by it the fate of all the characters is decided.

Phaon shows marked development. No longer do we see about him that air of indecision. Amidst the excitement of realized and conscious love, of anticipated flight and future happiness, he nevertheless does not fail to keep his wits about him. In order that his flight may be successful it must be secret so far as possible, and with that end in view he compels Rhamnes to accompany them to the seashore.

Suddenly Eucharis, one of Sappho's maids, hears a cry for help, and at the same moment Rhamnes bursts upon the scene loudly calling the slaves to action, and urging them to pursue the fugitives. He does not stop to explain but all seem to understand the situation, and when Sappho appears it does not require much urging on her part to make all eager for pursuit. Excitement for the moment sustains Sappho, but when all save faithful Rhamnes and Eucharis have gone she sinks down in unconsciousness.

Three hours have passed since Phaon made his escape with Melitta. For Sappho the time has been one long stretch of suffering. She is still lying on the grassy bank quite unconscious of anything save the struggle of her humanity with her ideal nature. Only when Eucharis speaks of a boat does Sappho seem alive to the world outside of self, and this only because the last hopeless hope is tied up with the capture and return of the fugitives. At last

a messenger arrives and relates how after a desperate resistance Phaon has at last been captured, and, together with Melitta, is being brought to Sappho. But Sappho had not thought of this new trial, of facing him who has so mercilessly robbed her of the whole end and aim of life: happiness. When she learns that he is being brought to her she cries out: "No, no, not hither! Who will hide me from his sight? Oh Aphrodite, protect thy child!" With these words she flies to the back ground and clings round the altar, where her slaves surround her and thus shield her from Phaon who just then enters with Melitta.

Phaon is furious. He rails, first at his successful enemies and then against Sappho who has employed them. When he attempts to see Sappho herself, Melitta makes some feeble resistance, but to no purpose. He forces his way through the crowd of slaves and discloses Sappho prostrate beforethe altar. The Phaon of the fifth act is not the Phaon of hhe first act. We can hardly recognize him. Every trace of timidity is gone. The consciousness of inferiority which he had felt in Sappho's presence is now replaced by a sense of superiority which has come to him in the presence of childish innocent Melitta, who has been absolutely dependent upon him for her support and protection. Here, again, Grillparzer has shown his profound knowledge of human nature. Self-reliance and character is developed in exact proportion to the demand placed upon it. Melitta demanded protection and Phaon rose equal to the demand. But as is always the case, a sudden step from the lower

to the higher brings with it a lack of understanding of the new conditions, which results in overestimation of ability and in arrogance. So it was with Phaon. This lack of understanding seems the only justification for his brutal and insulting speeches to Sappho. Of these, however, he repents later and even asks Sappho to bless Melitta and himself. But she answers coldly: "Deceiver". Phaon, however, was not a deceiver. He had truly loved Sappho. That his love was a mistaken love was not his fault. He had loved her as one loves the gods, or the good and the beautiful. He clasps Melitta in his arms, and kneeling with her before Sappho again asks for his own. He says to her,

> "Give love to men, and reverence to the gods!
> Give us our own, and take thou what is thine!
> Reflect on what thou dost, and who thou art!"

For the first time since the opening of the play does Sappho seem able to throw off the immediate present. "Remember who thou art" As she hears the words she gives a sudden start. Ah yes, she does remember now; she is consecrated to the gods. She looks at Phaon intently, then, without saying a word, suddenly leaves the stage.

In the fourth scene comes about the final development of Pahon. Again his anger had got the better of him when, in the preceeding scene, Sappho had left without forgiving him. Now he is boastful and defiant. Though all the powers of nature should combine against him he would still guard his Melitta. Aye he

would laugh to scorn the rage of Sappho. But as Rhamnes tells him, it is only because Sappho has deigned to look upon him that he now has the courage to brave her. Gradually the scoldings of Rhamnes calm Phaon and bring him to a better conception of his position towards Sappho: Sappho so infinitely great of soul that she is universally loved. This too has its effect on Phaon until he is thoroughly ashamed of himself and in his misery cries out,

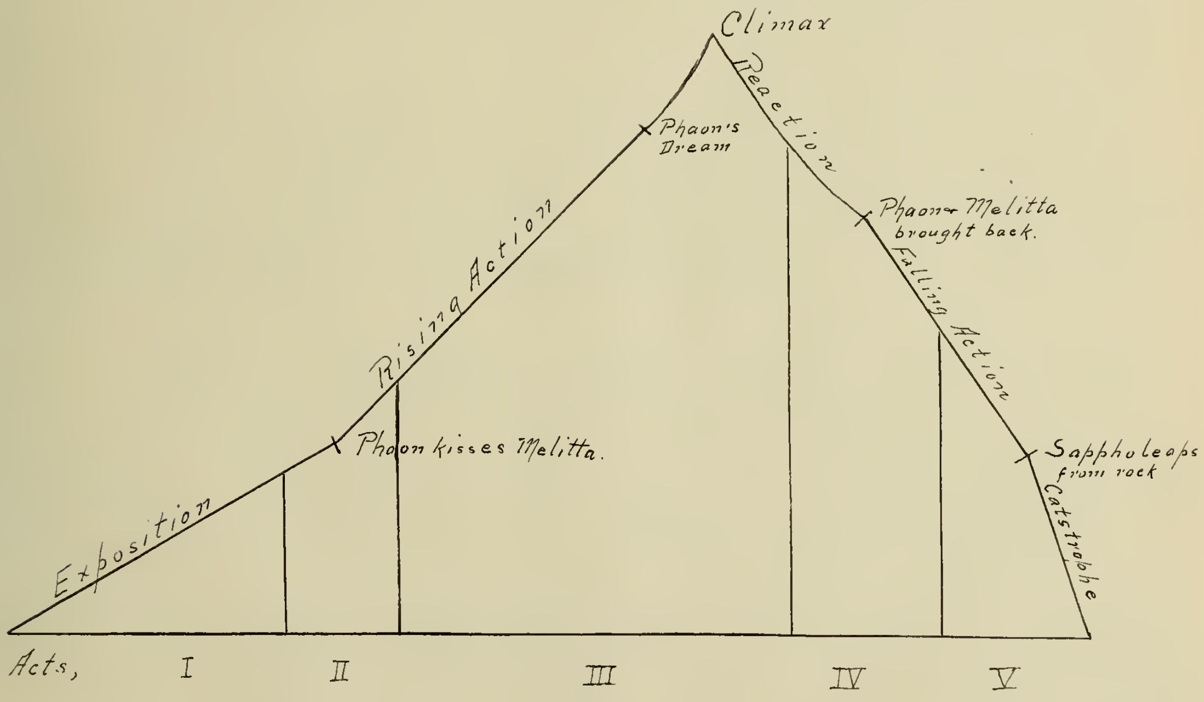
"Who shall save me from this anguish?"

When Sappho again comes upon the stage she is dressed as she was at the beginning of the drama. All traces of the conflict which she has sustained have passed away. She is calm and self-contained. She has no need now of anything that either Melitta or Phaon can give. Love is forever past and gone. In seeking for Phaon, she has found herself. Her place is henceforth with the gods. She commands her slaves to kindle the altar fires, and then in impassioned words implores the gods to quickly set her free. She has no power outside of them. They have consecrated her to poetry, and they have also fashioned her heart for human love. They have proffered her the cup of life but now, at their behest untouched she sets it down. She can no longer bear the struggle and prays the gods to take her to themselves. Her nobility is shown in her final and complete forgiveness of Melitta and Phaon. Calling them to her she kisses Phaon's brow, embraces Melitta, and then, just before throwing herself over the cliff, says,

whilst stretching her arms over Phaon and Melitta.

> "Give love to men and reverence to the gods.
> Enjoy what flowers for you, and- think of me.
> Thus do I pay the final debt of life
> On them your blessing, gods! Now, me receive."

Technically considered, the drama of Sappho is faultless . It possesses in a high degree all the requirements for a perfect drama. Its construction may be seen at a glance from the diagram below, which is used by Gustav Freytag in his "Technik des Dramas".



EXPOSITION: Sappho returns from the Olympian games where she has won the laurel wreath and also met Phaon whom she loves blindly.

(Melitta notices Phaon). Phaon introduced to the people. Sappho and Phaon alone. The gulf that separates them is made clear and we realize that Sappho in choosing Phaon for her lover, must descend from her ideal height. Phaon's bewilderment: his admiration for Sappho. Sappho realizes the discrepancy between the ideal and the real. (Act I.)

RISING ACTION: Sappho's suspicions are aroused at Melitta's behavior in the presence of Phaon. Melitta gives Phaon a flower. He kisses her. Sappho sees Melitta in Phaon's arms (Act II.) Her suspicions are confirmed when she hears Phaon murmur "Melitta" in his dream.

CLIMAX: Sappho questions Melitta. Melitta will not throw away the rose given her by Phaon. Sappho gives way to her anger, and draws her dagger. Phaon rescues Melitta . (Act III.)

FALL: Sappho tries to exile Melitta. Phaon prevents it and flies with her (Act IV.) At Sappho's command Phaon and Melitta are pursued, captured and brought back. Phaon accuses Sappho of transgressing the limits set for one consecrated to art.

CATASTROPHE: Sappho recognizes her guilt. She forgives Phaon and Melitta and atones for her weakness by seeking death (Act V.)

There are no secondary plots; each scene is a necessary part of the drama, and nothing could be omitted without harm to sequence

of events or character painting. We have here not only a succession of scenes, but each succeeding scene follows logically from the one preceding and each contributes its fraction of impulse towards the catastrophe. The "Three Unities", Action, Time, and Place, are all observed in a masterly fashion.

Müllner objected to the first act. He said that there was not enough dramatic movement. Grillparzer's own letter to the critic furnishes us the best answer to this objection. In it he tells us that he was aware of the lack of dramatic movement, but that such was the very quality which he desired to emphasize, in contrast to the "Ahnfrau". Aside from this Grillparzer had these things to consider: first he must make the catastrophe seem effective. In order to do this he shows Sappho to us in all her might and glory; in possession of all the conditions that can make human happiness complete, admired alike by slave, freeman and king. Secondly, he must make the catastrophe seem inevitable; this he does by indicating her peculiar nature as poetess, and her determination to descend from her Alpine heights into the valley where all seems destined but for love alone. Lastly he must not make the love of a mature woman for a youth appear ridiculous, and this he could only do by winning the sympathies of the spectators and readers. That he has done this, and done it admirable, no one will deny. She has our sympathy throughout the play.

Much has been said and written about the catastrophe, and nearly all the commentators try to show that the leap from the rock was

unnecessary. But when we remember Sappho's passionate nature, and the relentless progress of the play which gives her no time for rest or calm reflection, or, when we read the play straight through we can not but feel that death and death alone is the true ending.

Alas poor Sappho, thou anointed one,
To quaff life's burning cup was not for thee.
Thy lips, that charmed the gods with melody,
A mortal's carnal kiss must ever shun.

Thy shaping brain, thy deeply feeling heart,
Thy artist touch that swept the magic lyre,
Were not to be consumed in passion's fire,
But consecrated by the gods to art.

Alas, thou didst but suffer and endure,
But strive and yearn, though never to attain.
Thy gift of song and art thou didst adjure
For love which bore thee bitter fruit and pain.

But thine the guerdon of immortal fame,
The artist's crown, the poet's deathless name.

ACT I.

The first act, as well as part of the second, presents very little dramatic action. This, however is strictly in accordance with Grillparzer's aim. He felt the necessity of emphasizing Sappho's greatness as a poetess, the love and enthusiastic admiration of the Lesbians for her charming personality, and her calmness of soul, in order that after the storm of passion has swept over her we may have for her a feeling of pity and sympathy instead of abhorrence.

ein hohes Rosengebüsch: It was not a whim of Grillparzer's that led him to introduce roses into the drama. We learn from Sappho's poetry that she was partial to roses. She likens the beauty of the rose to her maidens, assigns a crown of them to the muses, and knows of nothing more perfect than "a golden flower" to which she may compare her little girl Kleis.

Scene 1

23ff Rhamnes, once Sappho's teacher, is exuberant over her success in winning the laurel wreath. He tries to call Melitta's attention to it, but she cares nothing for the wreath. Sappho she loves, and because Sappho is back again, therefore is she glad.

40 Rhamnes calling forth the maidens and then almost immediately sending them away again, gives the poet an opportunity to introduce Melitta and to show us what impression Phaon's appearance makes upon her.

Scene 2

46ff The wreath appears an ornament to Sappho simply because it reflects honor upon her fellow-citizens. As a mere tribute to her poetry she cares nothing for it.

63ff The proper names here used are fictitious (cp lines 1521ff). Great stress is here laid upon the Lesbian's devotion to Sappho, in order that a motive may be furnished for their zeal in her behalf when Phaon and Melitta escape.

95 Sappho would gladly exchange the laurel, which is the reward of the poetess, for the myrtle, which is sacred to the goddess of love. In Germany the myrtle takes the place of the orange blossom in this country.

99 It is love that Sappho wants. Hitherto (line 108) it has been mere goodwill that she has received.

Scene 3

109f In life's barter it has ever been her fortune to receive goodwill instead of love (cf. l. 15).

120 An invention of the poet. We have no historical proof of Sappho's ever having loved in vain.

123f It is the irony of fate that she should lose Phaon's love.

202f Already Sappho sees the danger to her happiness; a youth's first love is an ideal being, invested with beauty from his own

fancy, and when his passion cools, and he sees his lady-love through experienced eyes, she is no longer a goddess.

220 cf 214. He means that all these other singers could not loosen the bonds which held his spirit in chains.

247 Phaon is still in the hypnotic state that her presence produced upon him when first he saw her.

285 den Fluren, die die Lethe küsst; the Elysian Fields, the delightful region in the lower world where the blessed dwelt after death.

Scene 4

302 Rhamnes seems not to have taken her previous words (line 88) seriously.

313 des Gastrechts . . . . . Amt: The Greeks laid great stress upon hospitality.

Scene 5

The scene is not at all dramatic but in it we become acquainted with Sappho's hopes and misgivings. The anxiety she expresses about her relation to Phaon prepares us for the outbreak. At the same time the scene serves to show us the strong contrast between Sappho and Melitta.

330. Sappho has no presentiment of what is to result from calling Melitta's attention to Phaon.

338 There are several allusions to the timid way in which Melitta casts down her eyes (cp. lines 969 and 1091).

363 This is quite true, but in a way the exact opposite of what she had in mind.

389 cf. lines 466 and 468 where Phaon similarly contrasts Empfindung and Erkennen.

Scene 6

This scene might well have been made more dramatic, but Grillparzer wished to introduce this ode of Sappho's into the drama which bore her name, so that no one could say that there was nothing of her spirit in the drama.

ACT II.

Scene 2

527 The scene at the banquet had not kindled love in Melitta's bosom. It had only served to attract the attention of Phaon and Melitta on each other and to prepare them for the love which comes later. For this reason Grillparzer did not hesitate to omit the scene from the stage. Sappho's jest had also incensed Melitta against her mistress which is important for the sequel. (cf. Werke vol. III 119)

530 Hinting at Melitta's bashful words (lines 335ff).

Scene 3

This prayer of Melitta's corresponds in a way to Sappho's invocation in Scene 6 of Act I. The prayer, by the way, seems more Christian than pagan. Melitta could hardly expect to be called up to the gods; she evidently had the Elysian Fields in mind, and these were situated in the lower world (cf. lines 285 and note).

Scene 4

Phaon's conversation with Melitta, the kiss he gives her, are the arrows of the god of love, and only one as innocent, as simple as Melitta would not perceive it (cf. Werke, Vol. III; p. 119).

Scene 6

748ff It was the custom among the Aeolians and Dorians to form clubs. Sappho formed such clubs where young women came to her for instruction, much as the young men came to Socrates later in Greek history.

752ff Sappho is blind to the fact that her charming description of Melitta will produce an effect quite opposite to the one which she desires (cf. lines 330ff).

ACT III.

Scene 1

809 She means that his action was unpremeditated, and therefore deserves no blame.

822ff bückt er sich wohl das holde Blümchen von dem Grund zu

erlesen. This recalls Goethe's beautiful lyric.

"Im Schatten sah ich
Ein Blümchen stehn,
Wie Sterne leuchtend,
Wie Äuglein schön
Ich wolt' es brechen,
Da sagt' es fein:
Soll ich zum Welken
Gebrochen sein?

858 The dream of Phaon is a clever invention; it reveals the state of Phaon's heart to Sappho even before he knows it himself.

Scene 2

942ff Notice the change Sappho has undergone since speaking lines 270-5.

976. Sappho's calling Melitta back upon the stage hastens the breach.

Scene 5

1119 She means that Melitta's loyalty and her own happiness have been short lived.

Scene 6

In this scene Phaon finds himself. His love for Sappho has been a dream, he realizes it now, and so renounces it. His love for Melitta comes to full fruition when he is called upon to protect her from Sappho's dagger. It is this act of violence on Sappho's

part that frees him from the bonds of her enchantment.

1158ff Phaon's command here is an antithesis to Sappho's lines 1116.

ACT IV.

1195f Sappho has heard it said that great sorrow kills, but she cannot believe it. Bertha in Die Ahnfrau and Hero in Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen die of sorrow.

1207 Kein Undankbarer: the end of the unfinished sentence beginning with 1202. The very fact that it is unfinished makes it all the more forcible. She is about to say evil things of Phaon, but she will not debase herself by so doing.

1225 cf. 275ff.

Scene 2

1245 She is my work. Without me what were she. cf. 751 and 1873.

1328 An instance of Grillparzer's skill in keeping our sympathy for Sappho alive. At such a moment as this we would scarcely expect Sappho to be kind to Melitta. But Grillparzer draws aside the veil and we get a glimpse of Sappho's gentle nature- we must admire her.

Scene 3

The same tenderness is shown here and almost it gets the better of her new hatred (cf. line 1328).

Scene 4

1373 ff This is the second time that Phaon comes in answer to Melitta's prayer (cf. 1125).

Scene 5

1422ff. This idea of man always seeking his other half occurs frequently in Grillparzer's writings. It harks back to Plato's doctrine that primeval man was a double animal, that is, he had four hands, four feet, one head with two faces. But one day Zeus cut this creature in two and ever since man hasbeen hunting that other half- thus love originated. cf. Plato's Symposium (p. 189); cf. also Grillparzer's Die Argonauten (Act. III).

Scene 8

1521 See note on line 63. Here, as there, the names are a fiction of the poet.

ACT V.

Scene 1

1552 cf. 1289; where Rhamnes shows a similar solicitude for his mistress.

Scene 2

1583 Sappho's agony is so intense that Rhamnes notices it; he fears lest she should faint. This occasions his question.

1586 verhüllt sich die Augen mit der Hand. cf. note on 1328.

Scene 3

1616ff see lines 865-77

1663 Sappho does not merit the harsh words of Phaon and her feeling is one of deep indignation.

1713 The clouds that have been gathering have now burst in a thunderstorm and once more the sun shines; while the splendor of the past adds beauty to the future.

1727ff. cf. Sappho's words (949ff).

1759 Phaon means in "die Schuld der Unschuld", that Sappho is the personification of guilt and Melitta of innocence.

Scene 4

1813ff Rhamnes asks rather pertinently what his (Phaon's) opinion would be worth as set over against all Greece (cf 1875) where Rhamnes words have taken effect on Phaon, who in his agony has pressed his hands upon his brow.

1893 cf. Bible, Proverbs XXVI:27; also lines 1850f

Scene 5

1902 Eucharis seems to be the spy and tale bearer. It was she whom curiosity led to watch Melitta at the brook (line 988).

Scene 6

1956 This probably refers to her renown as a poetess and also to her peace of mind which has now come through her renunciation of Phaon's love.

1980 mit den Meinen: this does not mean her fellow-citizens as heretofore, but the gods to whom she returns (line 2042)

2010 She means those who have really besmirched her character, and who have applied their "wisdom" to the misinterpretation of her poems.

2023 cf. 1619 f.

2026 Grillparzer substitutes a cliff near Sappho's dwelling for the Leucadian rock of tradition, in order to preserve the unity of place and time.

202 Phaon had spoken these words in line 1783.